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ON-SCENE COORDINATOR'S REPORT - Removal Action at the Chicago Drums Site, Chicago, Illinois (Site ID #P1)

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Emergency Response Section

Timothy Fields, Director
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THRU: Basil G. Constantelos, Director
Waste Management Division

Attached please find the On-Scene Coordinator's letter report for the immediate removal action taken by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) at the Chicago Drums site in Chicago, Illinois. The report follows the format outlined in the National Contingency Plan (NCP).

Improperly stored and distributed pesticides in a small grocery store in residential neighborhood posed a threat to the community and prompted the removal action. The action, conducted from June 20 through June 22, 1984, consisted of collecting all contaminated material and transporting the materials to an incineration facility. All actions taken were consistent with Section 300.65 of the NCP.

Costs under control of the On-Scene Coordinator totalled \$23,536.60, which included \$22,567.40 for the Emergency Response Cleanup Services contractor. In addition, indirect U.S. EPA costs totalled \$3,568.50; the total project cost was therefore \$27,105.10.

The site is not listed on the National Priorities List.

Attachment

cc: B. Hamm, WH-548B
J. Strecker, IDEM

bcc: N. Niedergang, 5HE-12
J. Beck, 5RA-14
J. Oaks, 5HE-12
M. Elam, 5CS-TUB3

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ON-SCENE COORDINATOR'S LETTER REPORT

CERCLA REMOVAL ACTION

CHICAGO DRUMS

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

DELIVERY ORDER #6894-05-017

SITE ID #P1

REMOVAL DATES: June 20-22, 1984

Jack Barnette May 18, 1988

Jack Barnette

On-Scene Coordinator

Emergency Response Section

Waste Management Division

Region V

United States Environmental Protection Agency

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) initiated a removal action on June 20, 1984, to mitigate the threats posed to a residential neighborhood by improperly stored and distributed pesticides. The pesticides, stored near food products in a local grocery store, contained high concentrations of methyl parathion. The removal action consisted of the collection and subsequent incineration of the pesticide materials. The action was completed by June 22, 1984, and action costs totalled \$23,536.60, which included \$22,567.40 for the Emergency Response Cleanup Services contractor. The indirect U.S. EPA expenditures are not included in the above totals. The On-Scene Coordinator for the project was Jack Barnette.

Initial Situation

On June 18, 1984, the Chicago Health Department observed several 55-gallon drums and other containers containing materials contaminated with methyl parathion at two properties owned by James Downing. The Downing properties consisted of a combination grocery store and laundry facility at 3828 W. Cermak Road, and a house and garage at 4326 W. 18th Street, in Chicago, Illinois. The grocery store/laundromat was a free standing, two storied building with an apartment on the second floor. The apartment was occupied at the time of the removal action. Signs on the building advertised grocery and laundry facilities and an extermination service.

Mr. Downing's extermination business operations consisted of buying quantities of methyl parathion, blending it with other chemicals, and selling it in unmarked 1- to 5- gallon containers. Methyl parathion is defined as a restricted use pesticide by state and Federal law, and as such can only be bought and used by state certified operators. Representatives of the Chicago Health Department documented that Mr. Downing sold methyl parathion without the proper credentials for handling this product, and also established that Mr. Downing stored drums of methyl parathion in his garage and in the basement of his store.

A 55-gallon plastic drum, a 30-gallon steel drum, and a 250-gallon fuel storage tank used to store a pesticide blend including methyl parathion, were located in the basement of the store. Pesticides in the basement were stored immediately adjacent to canned goods which were sold in the grocery. On the shelves of the grocery were numerous small containers (up to one gallon size) of blended pesticide; these containers were in close proximity to food products. Three drums containing materials with high methyl parathion concentrations were stored in Mr. Downing's garage, as well as an empty drum and several 5-gallon containers of pesticide.

Mr. Merlin Rohlinger of the Illinois Department of Public Health collected samples from several of the containers in the store and garage. The analytical results indicated methyl parathion levels of 26.5%, 40.9%, and 42.8% in material from drums in the garage. Analysis of a sample obtained from the 250-gallon fuel tank in the basement of the store indicated a concentration of 0.85% methyl parathion. The sample collected from the plastic drum in the basement contained 2.7% methyl parathion. Samples from the numerous smaller containers ranged in concentration from 0.05% to 22.8%.

Representatives of the Chicago Health Department took the small containers from the grocery shelves and moved them to a city-owned facility for temporary storage. The Health Department ordered that Mr. Downing's store be closed until further notice.

Threat to Public Health and the Environment

Methyl parathion is used to control insects under approved conditions. This chemical should be stored in well ventilated areas, and protective gloves

should be used for all handling. Methyl parathion presents substantial threats to human health and the environment. The product is poisonous by skin contact, inhalation and ingestion. The pesticide is rapidly absorbed through the skin and repeated exposure may be increasingly hazardous. If exposed to flames, methyl parathion can produce toxic combustion byproducts. It is considered extremely dangerous to enter smoke from a fire involving this material.

The Downing house and store were located in a populated urban area where the risk of human exposure was very high. A spill or fire involving this material would have affected a large number of local residents and motorists on Cermak Road.

Actions Taken

Based on information provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Chicago Health Department, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, and Curtis Golden of the Pesticide Section of the Toxic Materials Branch, U.S. EPA Region V, verbal approval for funding was requested in order to respond immediately. Verbal approval for an immediate removal of hazardous substances from this site was received on June 20, 1984.

During the late afternoon and early evening of June 20, 1984, the Emergency Response Cleanup Services (ERCS) contractor to the U.S. EPA, Pedco Environmental, Inc., began collecting and overpacking containers from Mr. Downing's garage and from the city facility where some contaminated material had been temporarily stored. Overpacked materials were taken to the Petro-Chem Services, Inc., facility in Lemont, Illinois, for temporary storage while awaiting disposal.

At 7:30 a.m. on Friday, June 22, 1984, On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Jack Barnette met the contractor at Downing's store. The OSC collected a total of eight samples from three locations. Four samples were taken from the 250-gallon fuel storage tank located in the basement of the store; these samples were a clear to slightly pale watery liquid. Three samples were collected from a black 30-gallon steel drum in the basement; these samples were dark amber in color. One sample was taken from a blue plastic 55-gallon drum also in the basement. These samples are archived at Argonne National Laboratory.

The contractor removed the drums from the basement and transferred the contents of the fuel storage tank to plastic drums suitable for incineration. A total of 28 drums were generated, and contained all contaminated materials taken from both Downing properties, substances temporarily stored by the City of Chicago, and Petro-Chem Services, Inc. All contaminated wastes were transported to the SCA Chemical Services facility in Chicago for incineration. The wastes were incinerated at the SCA facility on November 9, 1984.

Costs for the action, as reported on a computerized cost summary (SPUR) by the U.S. EPA dated September 2, 1987, totalled \$23,536.60, of which \$22,567.40 was for the ERCS contractor. Direct U.S. EPA expenditures for personnel totalled \$969.20. The above totals do not include the indirect U.S. EPA costs, which were not tracked to the removal action project ceiling.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A - Action Memorandum
- Appendix B - Delivery Order, Procurement Request, Amendments, Modifications
- Appendix C - Polreps
- Appendix D - EPA 1900-55 Forms
- Appendix E - Analytical Report
- Appendix F - Chains of Custody
- Appendix G - Permits
- Appendix H - Manifest
- Appendix I - Invoices
- Appendix J - Media Reports